

The Assessment of Collaboration Between Police and Vigilante Services on Crime Prevention and Control in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State Nigeria

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Accepted August 01, 2020

The Nigerian Police is saddled with the constitutional responsibility of protecting Nigerians against all forms of insecurity, detects and prevents crime. The vigilante groups on the other hand interface in the relationship between the society and the law enforcement agents. Over the years, the vigilante groups are sometimes not tolerated or supported by the police because they are considered to be a threat to the state monopoly of legitimate force and the fact that the police is the only constituted authority vested with the responsibility of combating crime and securing the community. However, the police are overwhelmed by the threat of insecurity pose to Nigerians. Community policing has become a global trend especially in the 21st century. However, in Nigeria police institution providing the security are alienated from the people which poses a serious security challenge to Nigeria citizens. This study investigated the collaboration between the police and vigilante in crime prevention and control in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State Nigeria. It examined the impact of the relationship between Nigeria police and vigilantes on crime prevention in the study area. The study adopted Routine Activities and Situational crime prevention theories as guide. It was a cross-sectional study which combined quantitative and qualitative methods in data collection. Questionnaires were administered on randomly selected 26 police respondents aged 18 years and above while four (4) in-depth interviews were conducted among the DPO are 25 respondents under the vigilantes and their leaders, members of the public quantitative across the study area. Quantitative data were analysed at univariate levels while the qualitative data were content analysed. Contrary to some previous studies that found the police and vigilantes as antagonistic of each other, this study found that police and vigilante maintained cordial working relationship with each other and the effective collaboration between the two security outfits had a great impact on crime reduction in Oke-Ogun community where the study was carried out. It established that police and vigilante were in good working relationship and that there was effective collaboration between the two security outfits to fight crime in the study area. The study recommends the need for more synergy between the police and Vigilante in crime prevention. It concluded that for the tempo of vigilance activities and relationship with the police to be sustained there is need for official recognition of this informal group of crime control by the Federal Government as an ancillary structure to the police.

Key words: Collaboration, Police, Vigilantes, Crime prevention, Community policing.

INTRODUCTION

This paper examined the collaboration between the police and vigilante services on crime prevention in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State Nigeria. Policing the community has been the concern of people living together in both the rural and urban settings of Nigeria. In recent times, community people have designed measures through which they can safeguard their environment and live together in peace without fear of molestation, intimidation and security threat from any external aggressor. The reduction of crimes, security of their lives and properties was paramount in their minds because members of the community viewed crimes and criminality as social problems that must be dealt with if they are to live a peaceful life. In realization of this goal community people have therefore put in place practical measures to combat crimes and ensure safety of lives and properties in their domain. The inadequate policing system led to the emergence of other forms of policing such as vigilante groups as a result of feelings of insecurity by the people of the Nigerian community.

At the community level, vigilante security outfits were set up to complement the efforts of the police in carrying out its statutory functions while the police as one of the agents of government was established to prevent and detect crimes, apprehend offenders among other functions.

As at the time of the study in 2016 Nigeria had 357,000 police officers which was grossly below the UN benchmark of one police man to 400 civilians with an estimated population of over 180 million people Nigeria is certainly underpoliced.

Police refers to socio-political and quasi legal institutions state agencies charged with the enforcement of criminal law and the maintenance of order. The state agencies designated as police as well as community groups are both involved in policing. Community groups who carry out activities aimed at safety and social order do not constitute police. No society can do without policing. However, historical evidence indicates that societies have existed without formal police forces Alemika (1997). However, the inability of the police to guarantee safety of live and property created a security vacuum because of shortage of manpower which made it difficult for wide coverage of the entire country by the police. As observed by Okunola (2006), the police service is understaffed, personnel are extremely

poorly trained, poorly equipped, very poorly paid underfunded with about 1300 police stations spread across Nigeria with land mass of 923,768km² is an indication that services of police is thin on the ground and concentrated in urban areas with dilapidated infrastructures provision. With the scenario presented above, it would be difficult if not impossible for the police to perform optimally without the assistance of other security agencies to complement its services. Igbo (2006) stated that Nigeria has extensive land mass, needs more police coverage and more police visibility. Hills (2008) also observed that the Nigeria police, under resourced officers are incapable of effectively policing a country as big, populous, poverty stricken and divided as Nigeria. The history of community police relations in Nigeria has been described as frosty as the idea of policing imposed on the country by the colonial masters was calculated to foster an antagonism between the policed and the police. (Tamuno, 1970; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2000; Onoja, 2007).

Since the introduction of vigilante as an informal security outfit to complement the efforts of the police, the outfit has been playing its role in fighting crime in the neighborhood communities in Nigeria. Both the Nigeria police and vigilante groups have been working together and are also collaborating to combat crime in some communities in Nigeria. The group existed in Nigeria for decades under both military and civilian rules. They have traditionally been seen as an extension to the work of law enforcement officers in a country with high level of delinquency and lack of proper policing, training, inadequate equipment and personnel (Okeke, 2013). This was borne out of the need to provide cheap and effective policing to complement the effort of the state police that is facing the problem of manpower shortage. Vigilante groups have been created to prevent crime and secure the lives and property of the people of the community where they are domicile. The effectiveness of this partnership and collaboration is very germane if success would be achieved in crime prevention. The question then arises:

- To what extent have the police and vigilantes been collaborating with each other on crime prevention?
- And what type of relationship exists between the police and vigilantes in crime prevention in Oke-

Ogun Community of Oyo State?

THE PROBLEM

The inability of the police to cover the entire country and manpower shortage created a gap in policing. Effective policing has a positive impact on reducing neighborhood crime. It also reduces the incidence of crime and improve the quality of life of the people in the community, where effective policing is lacking there would be a problem. The inadequate policing system, the undercoverage of areas of operation and shortage of manpower are some of the problems confronting the Nigeria police in the discharge of its duties. This has therefore created a vacuum that must be filled to achieve effective policing of the society. Since neither the police nor the criminal justice system such as the courts and prisons could bear the responsibility of ensuring a safe and secured community alone, the public has a very active role to play in ensuring public safety (Skolnick and Bayley 1988). Hence, the establishment of other non-states security outfits such as vigilante to complement the service of police in conducting crime in Nigeria became imperative. In the past the relationships between the Nigeria police and citizens were largely characterized by suspicion, prejudice mutual disrespect, conflict and violence (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2000).

Rotimi (2001) explicates the reasons for the police, citizens feuds in the colonial times and notes that since the Police stood as the symbols of authority which were responsible for the enforcement of traffic regulations, they were usually at logger heads with members of the public. Unfortunately, the love lost relationship between the police and public extends to the post-colonial era (Ikuteyijo and Rotimi, 2010).

The police need the cooperation of the public in carrying out its operations, without the cooperation of the people being policed it will not be effective in the discharge of its duties. As noted by Alemika (1988); (Okeke, 2013) to solve this dilemma, there must be a cordial relationship between the police and the citizens and also be a working partnership between them if laudable goals are to be achieved. However, the experience from the community policing practice elsewhere especially in advanced countries such as U.S and UK gave rise to the introduction of other non-state security outfits such as vigilantes which complement the service of police even though not

licensed to operate by the Federal Government of Nigeria. It is important that cordial relationship should be sustained by trust and confidence especially between the police and vigilante as informal mechanism of crime control that exist in residents' community. It is for this reasons that the study investigated the relationship between the police and vigilante operatives in crime control and prevention in Oke-Ogun Community of Oyo State, Nigeria. What type of relationship existed between the two security outfits? Is there collaboration between the Police and Vigilantes on crime prevention in the resident community?

Objective of the Study

The study assessed the relationship between vigilante operatives and police on crime prevention. It also examined the type of collaboration between the two security outfits and the emerging arguments that both outfits could not leverage together in combating crime.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Community policing is a term which has been defined in many ways by different scholars but the central theme is the collaboration of efforts between the police and members of the public in combating crime and the fear of crime (Ikuteyijo and Rotimi 2010). In Nigeria, community policing was introduced in 2003 when some police officers were sent to England, courtesy of the British Department for International Development (DEID), to understudy community policing as practiced in the UK (Ikuteyijo, 2009). Consequently, in 2004, more officers were trained as Community Development Officers (DP) in Enugu, Southeastern Nigeria (Dickson, 2007). It is noteworthy however, that community policing as practiced in the UK is definitely not applicable to the Nigerian context without necessary adjustments given the long-standing antagonism between the police and the public. Dickson, (2007) has noted some impediments to the successful implementation of community policing in Nigeria and they include internal resistance by policemen who benefited from the traditional policing and who prefer to maintain the status quo, lack of commitment to the project by implementing officers, lack of support from members of the public, inadequate support from the

government and poor welfare package/incentives for policemen.

However, one of the biggest impediments to the success of community policing in Nigeria is the hostile relationship between the Police and the Informal policing machinery usually made up of some faction of ethnic militia groups in the country (Rotimi, 2001). These militia groups, the informal unit of crime control provide security for the community in which they are resident. Consequent upon the dislocation of relationship between the police and the informal security mechanism, series of reprisal attacks were apparent (Palmiotto, 2000). As a result, some critics advocated for its sustenance and integration into the conventional system of policing (Babawale, 2003; Guichaoua, 2009; Ikuteyijo, 2009). In the wake of rising crime rates in most parts of the country and the seeming inability of the formal police to arrest the situation, the local vigilante groups (also known as Night-Guards) comprising mostly members of ethnic militias came to the rescue of most Nigerian community (Ikuteyijo and Rotimi, 2010).

However, there have been frequent clashes between the Police and these Groups. Basically, the operation and constitution of most of these groups put them in confrontation with the police (Okeke, 2013). Besides the crude means of crime detection used by these groups, the instant judgment meted out to their victims also pitches them against the police who are to ensure the maintenance of law and order and enforce the human rights of all citizens irrespective of their offences (Onyeozili, 2005). The summary of the review of literature above, shows that in the past there was lack of cooperation and good working relationship between the police and community security outfits established to prevent crime and ensure security and safety of the community. While the police see the other non-state security groups as illegitimate and incompetent to handle security and crime matters the non-state groups on the other hand sees the police as a corrupt and unreliable organization that cannot be trusted in tackling the problem of crime and insecurity. The scenario presented above reflected the perception of members of the public on the performance of the police as an organization that could not live to the expectations of many Nigeria citizens in the prevention of crime and the security of lives and properties. It is believed that for the two security outfits to succeed there must be good working relationship, confidence and trust between them.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. The Routine Activity Theory provide the theoretical perspective which was developed by Cohen and Felson, 1979, draws upon control theories and explains crime in terms of crime opportunities that occur in everyday life. A crime opportunity requires that elements converge in time and place including a motivated offender, suitable target or victim and lack of a capable guardian such as security guards or even pedestrians who would witness the criminal act and possibly intervene or report to the police. The theory holds that crime is normal and depends on the opportunities available. If a target is not protected enough and the reward is worth it, crime will happen. Crime only needs an opportunity to occur (Cohen and Felson, 1979).

2. Situational crime prevention theory has been defined as the use of measures directed at highly specific forms of crime which involve the management, design or manipulation of the immediate environment in a systematic and permanent way as possible (Hough et al 1980).

Situational crime prevention methods can operate at different levels affecting the individual, the community or the physical environment (Bennetti, 1986). In practiced terms, situational crime prevention approach entails the following measures: reduce the opportunities for criminal to commit crime, changes criminal ideas about whether they can get away with a particular crime, makes it seems harder, riskier and less rewarding to commit crime, making changes to buildings and streets to make them safer, asking the police for help, using common sense to stop criminals, using neighbors to look out for crime, working with people from different agencies, crime prevention is everybody's job, it takes the help of everyone to make crime prevention work. Finally, its focus is on reducing crime in quick and practical ways by removing criminal opportunities. Because the causes of crimes are rooted in the details of life, crime control is also focused upon everyday life, rather than diverted into a separate system of blame and punishment. The point is that criminal opportunities vary with routine activities that provide for basic needs such as food and shelter. In other words, crime in neighborhood is motivated in time and space, consequent upon a vacuum created by absence of members of a household. The vacuum in this case is linked with the economic activities of a capable guardians that is mobile to sustain body and soul. As

a routine activity pattern disperses people away from their families and households, offenders will find targets lacking capable guardians and crime will occur.

The import of routine activities theory is that crime rates can be explained by the availability of suitable targets, the absence of capable guardians and the presence of motivated offenders. The strength of the theory lies in the fact that it can explain crimes rates and trends in the presence or absence of any other motivating factors.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

i. Study Area

The study was carried out in four Local Government Areas of Oke-Ogun Oyo State Nigeria. Oyo State has an estimated population of 6,617,720 covering the 33 Local Government Areas with staff strength of about 6,005 police officers.

Out of 33 Local Government Areas in the State Oke-Ogun zone is made up of 10 government areas. With a population of 1.5m as per 2006 National Population Census Oke-Ogun. Saki West, Saki East, Atisbo and Iseyin comprising eight communities in Oke-Ogun were randomly selected from the four (4) Local Government Areas.

ii. Research Design

Survey research design was adopted for the study. It was descriptive and explorative using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection.

iii. Sampling Technique

In selecting our respondents, we adopted the purposive sampling method. This technique was used in selecting the 26 sample of the police respondents from the 4 local government areas. There are 4 police headquarters in the 4 local government areas of the study. From each police station we randomly selected the number of officers (rank and files) to which the questionnaire was distributed. It must be noted that there were few police personnel in the Oke-Ogun area where the study was carried out.

The Local Government Area were delineated into

wards and households respectively. The inhabitants are predominantly Yoruba with the presence of other tribes and nationalities. The choice of Oke-Ogun was informed due to the concentration of vigilantes and prevalence of crime in the zone. The study population consisted of male and female in each of the (4) four Local Government Areas.

Respondents were sampled from each police station and the target population captured individual police officers who were permanent staff and had spent not less than three years in their duty post and had attained the age of 18 years and above. A sample size of 26 Police participants was drawn which cut across the rank and files of the police personnel in the (4) four Local Government Areas for quantitative data. Qualitative study was also conducted using the guide for the four (4) Divisional Police Officers in the 4 (four) Local Government Areas while in-depth interviews were conducted among 25 purposively selected members of the communities including members of vigilantes and their leaders in each of the four (4) local government areas. All interviews were conducted in English language while illiterates among some members of the community and vigilante operatives were interviewed in Yoruba.

In the in-depth interview, we engaged one Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in each of the Local Government Areas Police Station we engaged leaders and members of the vigilante group who were purposively selected. Our questionnaire was structure to meet the objective of our study. Our data were obtained from the primary source: which are the police personnel, the leaders of vigilante, members of the vigilante groups, and members of the public. The primary source were questionnaire and interviews. Our questions and the questionnaire administered were structured to meet the objectives of the research. The questionnaire were for the police (Rank and file). In-depth Interview, were with DPO, members of the communities, vigilante members and their leaders.

iv. Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative data through questionnaires collected from the police personnel were sorted out, using the codes and analysed through the use of simple percentage, frequency and tables in the presentation of findings. The descriptive method was used for qualitative data from the recorded interviews and

discussions with the DPO, members of the public, leaders and member of vigilante groups were content analysed. Ethical consideration guiding social research namely respect for persons, non-maleficence to participants, beneficence to participants and justice were strictly observed.

Police Opinions on Vigilante Operatives and Collaboration

The study investigated police and vigilante collaboration on crime prevention in Oke-Ogun area. This was to understand how police and vigilante had worked together to curb crime in Oke-Ogun communities and the effect of collaboration between the two security outfits on crime prevention in the study area.

In **Table 1** some police respondents (61.5%) believed that crime has reduced in the last ten years in the study area. There were 38.5% of the participants who held contrary belief to the statement. Some Police officers 73.1% attested to the role of vigilante operative in crime control as effective while 26.9% of the respondents held contrary opinions. Police relationship with vigilante operatives showed that 53.8% of the police officers had worked with vigilante either as patrol team or arrests of criminals. There were 46.2% of the police officers who said they had never worked with vigilante group. Furthermore, some 84.6% of police participants in the study maintained that it was necessary and legally required that vigilantes should hand over suspects arrested for crime to the police. Some 15.4% pointed that such might not be necessary particularly where there could be possibility to compromise by policemen. Participants who maintained the latter view held that where such hand over of suspect was possible it should be to the knowledge of top officers in the police station to avoid unwarranted release of suspects and build trust in vigilante who handed over such criminals to the police, whereas 69.2% of the police participants agreed that vigilante operatives handed over suspect to police, there were 30.8% that disagreed with this statement.

The critical statement is that vigilante services were acceptable to police force. Firstly, vigilante operatives now hand over arrested crime suspects to the police and this has reduced perception that vigilante takes laws into their hands. Secondly, there was growing relationship between vigilante and police men in crime control and this had improved

trust between the two security outfits. Also, police believed that vigilante involvement in crime control yielded positive result. This perception was reinforced by police's belief that to fight crime requires joint collaborative efforts among civil security organizations which vigilante played vital role. Against the position maintained in the foregoing, some 50.0% of the police participants attested that the communities they lived were guarded by vigilante operatives. As a result, 50.0% expressed perception of vigilante's role in crime control as effective, (15.4%) moderately effective and 34.6% ineffective. Notwithstanding, 76.9% of the participants were satisfied with vigilante operatives in crime control. There were 23.1% of the participants that expressed dissatisfaction with services of vigilantes. Yet 96.2% of the police participants disagreed that vigilante operatives should be disbanded. This was an empirical indication that police perception of vigilante services was supportive and would uphold the need for continuous existence especially in Oke-Ogun community. This statement was buttressed specifically when a Divisional crime officer, fifty eight year old, said:

Police relationship with vigilante is cordial. In the last three years, crime rate had reduced and we are working together, vigilantes are assisting us. Sometimes police and vigilantes do joint patrol together vigilantes handed over arrested suspect to us. (Police).

(Kii/Saki East Local Government/Oyo State/2016)

Similarly, another participant, a Divisional Police officer said:

It is certain and obvious that vigilante alone cannot curb crime. Vigilante only assists the police. The Job of curbing crime can also not be limited to the police. This is why police need cooperation of vigilantes. (Kii/Atisbo Local Government Oyo State/2016).

These views above aptly described positive perception of police towards vigilante operatives. Some collaborative efforts between police and vigilante operatives were expressed in the study area. 76.9% of police participants agreed that there should be collaboration between police and vigilantes in crime control. Areas of collaboration should reflect joint patrol 73.1% to 5.4% supported the use of the arms, while 11.5% supported training especially in the aspect of manpower skills to fight crimes. Moreover 69.2% described as cordial, and 30.8% described as not cordial the relationship between police and vigilante operatives. Nevertheless, 73.1%

Table 1. Shows the Police Perception on Vigilante and Collaboration.

Crime rate has reduced in the last ten years	Frequency Total = 26	Percentage Total = 100%
Yes	16	61.5
No	10	38.5
Vigilantes are effective in crime control/ prevention		
Effective	19	73.1
Not effective	7	26.9
Relationship with vigilante in crime		
Worked with vigilante	14	53.8
I have never worked with vigilante	12	46.2
Vigilante should hand over suspects arrested to the police		
Necessary	22	84.6
Not necessary	4	15.4
Vigilante hand over suspects to police		
Yes	18	69.2
No	8	30.8
Availability of vigilantes in resident community		
Yes	13	50.0
No	13	50.0
Satisfaction with vigilante operative in crime prevention and control		
Satisfied	20	76.9
Not satisfied	6	23.1
Vigilante operatives should be disbanded		
Agreed	1	3.8
Disagreed	25	96.2
Vigilante operatives and police should collaborate		
Agreed	20	76.9
Disagreed	6	23.1
Aspect of collaboration with vigilante by police		
Joint patrol	19	73.1
Use of fire arms	4	15.4
Training	3	11.5
Police relationship with vigilantes		
Cordial	18	69..2
Not cordial	8	30.8
Effect of Police relationship with vigilantes		
Effective to control crime	19	73.1
Not effective to control crime	7	26.9
There is miscarriage of justice against suspects handed over to police by vigilantes		
Agreed	5	19.2
Disagreed	21	80.8

Table 1. Continue.

Police use to contest activities of vigilantes		
Agreed	2	7.7
Disagreed	24	92.3
Perception of vigilantes in crime prevention and control		
Negative	6	23.1
Positive	20	76.9

Source: Field Survey, 2016

agreed that relationship between police and vigilantes was effective to control crime, whereas 26.9% disagreed with the statement.

FINDINGS

The police and vigilantes have cooperated in crime control in Oke-Ogun communities. The cooperation was effective to curb crime. Similarly, the police and vigilantes were engaged in joint patrol, training of vigilantes and exchange of security information led to reduction in crime. The implication was the police perception of vigilante was positive because approach to security services by members of vigilante group changed. This perception was also reflected in the relationship of police to vigilante group. The finding above is summarized in the view of a participant when he said:

Criminal activities were rampant in the community especially armed robbery, kidnapping and rape. After intervention of vigilante, crime has reduced. For the past three years now, there were not incessant attacks and robbery by criminals. (Kii/Saki West Local Government/Oyo State/2016).

Another participant, a Divisional Police Officer stated in his word:

Police and vigilantes are working together. Vigilantes are used by the police to prevent crime due to shortage of police personnel. Police give training to vigilantes on what to do when they arrested criminals. Police know that services of vigilantes were complementary.

The above finding attested to collaboration between police and vigilante. It also upheld public perception of vigilante services which complement conventional police force services or conventional policing efforts. Furthermore, 80.8% of the

participants disagreed that there were occasions when vigilantes complained about perceived miscarriage of Justice against suspects handed over to police. There were 19.2% that agreed with the above statement. To show further collaboration between police and vigilantes, 92.3% disagreed that police sometimes contested activities of vigilante operatives in crime control. While some 7.7% of the participants agreed with the statement. Consequently (76.9%) expressed positive perception of vigilante involvement in crime control and 23.1% expressed negative perception.

A divisional police officer said:

Police have records of all vigilante members in the community, police provide training for vigilantes and we collaborate on regular basis, police under my control in this division have identities of vigilante operatives in all the beat, unit and area. (Kii/Iseyin Local Government Area/Oyo State/2016).

Another respondent, a forty-seven year old, Divisional Police officer said:

The vigilante security people lived in the community to help the police reduce crime. Offences in the bush and villages were areas vigilantes did help. This is because they are familiar with the term and lived among the people. The vigilantes arrested criminals and handed them over to us (Police) for prosecution. (Kii/Atisbo Local Government Area/Oyo State/2016).

A respondent and leader of vigilante groups in one of the Local Government Area specifically said:

The vigilantes were involved in crime prevention in the community. Whenever, thieves are operating, members of the community would invite us to rescue the situation. If the robbers are caught, we handed them over to the police. We also interrogated the robbers, drilled them and ensured that they are brought to Justice by police. We often time follow up cases of robbers which we arrested sometimes

police compromised". (IDI/Iseying Local Government, Oyo State/2016.

Nevertheless, evidence from the current finding in Oke-Ogun showed that the continuous and unbroken relationship between police and vigilantes was effective to check all form of criminalities such as armed robbery, theft, kidnapping to mention a few. In the study area, it was evidenced that police and vigilantes' groups collaborated together to fight crime. The relationship between the police and vigilantes was cordial and this contributed to success recorded in fighting crime in Oke-Ogun communities. Contrary to the views of some scholars that police and vigilantes are antagonistic of each other and that vigilantes are sometimes not tolerated by the law enforcement agents because they are considered as a threat to monopoly of legitimate force (Fourchard, 2005). In the study, the findings did not support the position of Fourchard 2005; Okeke, 2013; Ikuteyijo and Rotimi, 2010. From both qualitative and quantitative findings, it was revealed that the police and vigilante were in good working relationship and there was effective collaboration between them, this collaboration covered aspect of training, joint patrol, intelligence sharing and team work to combat crime which yielded positive results in Oke-Ogun community.

Basically, some police participants expressed reservation about activities of vigilante operatives particularly in the aspect of brutality and vendetta. This was however, not beyond police control and there were only few individuals engaged in the act.

Collaboration between police and vigilantes was unhindered in crime control in Oke-Ogun communities. Police maintained smooth relationship with vigilantes in the study area and this is significant to crime situation reported by participants. Vigilantes handed over suspected criminals to police for prosecution. Also, police join with vigilantes to patrol community. Trainings which covered crime investigation, professional handling of weapons and civil relationship, were conducted for members of vigilante security operatives through collaborative effort of the police. Although there was expression of suspicion by the police and vigilantes, this was however, insignificant to deter their collaboration in crime control. The synergy between vigilante and the police was largely responsible for reason crime was relatively reduced in the study area.

The physical presence of the police and vigilantes and Joint Patrol by the outfits reduced crime rate in

Oke-Ogun area where the study was carried out. The finding of the study demonstrated that vigilante operations in Oke-Ogun were pragmatic in terms of collaboration with police and public residents, maintaining cordial relationship brought about a reduction in crime rate in the area. The pragmatic measures put in place such as monitoring of road block, stop and search at check points and joint patrol by police and vigilantes (the two security outfits put the criminal activities at bay and reduce crime in Oke-Ogun community.

The vigilante groups render valuable service to the country by fighting crimes and preventing criminal from having access to the community or society where they operate similarly the police also performs its statutory functions of preventing crimes among others. The use of vigilante operatives in Oke-Ogun Communities significantly reduced crime and kept criminals at check as there was no opportunity for armed robbers and criminals to operate at will or unchallenged. Therefore, the presence of vigilante kept criminal at bay and reduced crime to its lowest ebb. The vigilante and the police represent the capable guardians which prevented opportunity for crime not to occur in the neighborhood community. The findings of the study aligned with the two theories adopted; that is, Routine Activities and Situational Prevention.

CONCLUSION

The security services of vigilantes in the study were critical to effective services of the police. The presence of vigilante in Oke-Ogun ensured that crime was nipped in the bud and members of community derived confidence in the service. There is Joint Patrol of vigilantes and police in policing the communities. This shows that vigilantism has undergone changes which now make it relevant in the eyes of Government and the relevant agencies to partner in crime control.

Like previously police believed that members of vigilantes were suspicious and could not be trusted in security business. The story has changed to reflect collaboration and effective crime control by Joint effort of police and vigilantes especially in Oke-Ogun area. It is not a misplaced fact that vigilante performance in crime control complements the police to safeguard community. Government has continued to allocate some amount as funding of vigilantes in

Oke-Ogun in recognition of the civil security service to society. The vigilante assisted in bridging the gap between the police and communities. The vigilante was useful in the area of intelligence gathering and maintenance of peace among members of the communities. The cooperation between police and vigilante yielded some good results.

RECOMMENDATION

The Government at all levels should integrate vigilante services as integral part of Nigeria security forces especially in community policing where members are familiar with native citizens and topography of their communities. If this is done it will further strengthen the existing relationship, partnership and collaboration between the two security outfits in the study area. Both the police and vigilantes joined forces together to combat crime in the zone, they are both involved in Joint Patrols, Police provide regular training to members of vigilantes and vigilantes also give information to the police and handed over criminal suspects to the police. The intelligence sharing and exchange of information between the vigilante and police helped to combat crime and exposed the criminal hideouts in Oke-Ogun community. The cordial relationship and cooperation between them instilled confidence in both the police and vigilante and the partnership between them accounted for reduction in crime rate in the zone.

There were not enough police, the few that were available are not indigenes of the zone while the vigilantes are indigenes and are closer to the people and this paid off for crime prevention. The number of police to provide security and protect lives and property was inadequate to police the community at day and night. In totality, the number of policemen in the four local government areas was 173 whereas the number of vigilante groups in the four local government area was 438 which far exceeded the number of police. Therefore, the police had no option than to collaborate with vigilantes to combat crime in Oke-Ogun community where the study was carried out.

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